

Rep. Marcy Kaptur congratulated Oberlin College for winning the “Green Power Challenge” in the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) for the third consecutive year.

“The Oberlin College community is leading the way, not only in its own athletic conference but throughout Northern Ohio, with its amazing commitment to green energy and sustainable development,” said Kaptur, a staunch advocate of alternative energy and energy independence for the United States.

For the past three years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has tracked green power purchases by colleges and universities across collegiate athletic conferences.

To participate in the challenge and earn a listing, a conference must have an aggregate green power purchase of at least 10 million kilowatt-hours between member institutions. Oberlin College carried the NCAC almost on its own with 9.98 million kilowatt-hours of green power in 2008-2009. Allegheny College in Meadville, Pa. was the other NCAC school to participate.

Kaptur noted that Oberlin was the only Ohio college or university to participate in the competition. She urged other Ohio schools to participate in the Green Power Challenge. “Our institutions of higher education should be in the arena, moving the ball forward on green power, not sitting on the sidelines,” she said.

In 2004, Oberlin College agreed to buy a utility green power product from Oberlin Municipal Light & Power and generate green power on-site, which helps reduce the environmental effects associated with the campus’ electricity use.

In the 12 months of the Green Power competition, Oberlin’s purchase represented 41 percent of the school’s annual electricity usage. The purchase equaled the amount of electricity needed to power almost 1,000 average American homes each year; the college’s “carbon footprint” has been reduced by approximately 12,000 tons annually.

“Oberlin College is pleased to be recognized for its commitment to reducing its carbon footprint through the purchase of renewable energy,” says Marvin Krislov, President of Oberlin College. “Global warming is one of the most important issues we face today, not only in the United States but throughout the world. We at Oberlin College believe it is important to be a leader in facing this challenge through education and action.”

“We congratulate Oberlin,” said Cheryl Newton, director of EPA Region 5’s Air and Radiation Division. “They’re helping to improve the air we breathe and cutting greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.”

This year’s challenge included 44 competing institutions representing 22 different conferences nationwide. The University of Pennsylvania was the overall champion with a purchase of almost 193 million kilowatt hours of green power. The Ivy League, of which Penn is a member, was this year’s overall champion conference with a cumulative annual purchase of more than 225 million kilowatt hours.

EPA's Green Power Partnership encourages organizations to buy green power as a way to reduce the environmental impacts associated with traditional fossil fuel-based electricity use. The partnership includes a diverse set of organizations including Fortune 500 companies, small and medium businesses, government institutions as well as a growing number of colleges and universities.

More information on EPA's College and University Green Power Challenge and the list of winners is at http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/initiatives/cu_challenge.htm .